



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/705,400	11/10/2003	Satoshi Mizutani	20050/0200478-US0	4410
7278	7590	06/06/2005		EXAMINER
DARBY & DARBY P.C. P. O. BOX 5257 NEW YORK, NY 10150-5257				KIDWELL, MICHELE M
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3761	

DATE MAILED: 06/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/705,400	MIZUTANI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Michele Kidwell	3761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 April 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 4-7 and 11-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 8-10 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4804;6804;22504.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of Species 2 in the reply filed on December 23, 2004 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the open transitional phrase "comprising" has been constructed to read on many of the species cited in the office action. This is not found persuasive because the transitional phrase "comprising" is used to define the scope of the claim with respect to what unrecited additional components or steps, if any, are excluded from the scope of the claim, not to define or disclose the relationship between independent inventions. The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 4 – 7 and 11 – 21 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on March 7, 2005.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 – 3 and 8 – 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Raidel et al. (WO 98/43684).

With respect to claim 1, Raidel et al. (hereinafter "Raidel") discloses an interlabial pad comprising an absorbing sheet portion (18) facing a body side upon wearing the interlabial pad, and a support sheet (20) backing the absorbing sheet portion; wherein the absorbing sheet portion comprises a pair of absorbing sheet bodies (28), each of which contains an absorber (36), said absorbing sheet bodies are separated along a substantial center line of the interlabial pad (figure 2), and said absorbing sheet body is bonded to said support sheet portion comprising an impermeable support sheet on a peripheral edge portion of the interlabial pad (figures 3 – 4) thereby the body fluid can flow into a void which is formed between a garment face side of the absorbing sheet body and the body face side of the support sheet as set forth in figure 4.

With reference to claim 2, Raidel discloses an interlabial pad wherein a side end of the interlabial pad has a shape of an arc, and both peripheral ends of the arc converge toward edge ends of the substantial center line along a longitudinal direction of the interlabial pad as set forth in figure 2.

As to claim 3, Raidel discloses an interlabial pad wherein the pair of absorbing sheet bodies are separated from each other and a groove portion is provided between the absorbing sheet bodies as set forth in figures 3 – 4.

Regarding claims 8 – 10, see the abstract and figures 2 – 5.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michele Kidwell whose telephone number is

571-272-4935. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 5:30am - 2:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Larry Schwartz can be reached on 571-272-4390. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Michele Kidwell
Examiner
Art Unit 3761